

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER @ CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL

PARENT

HANDBOOK



Revised March, 2026

Jeni Pandolfi

Director of Early Childhood Education



Welcome to [cdc@cbi](#)!

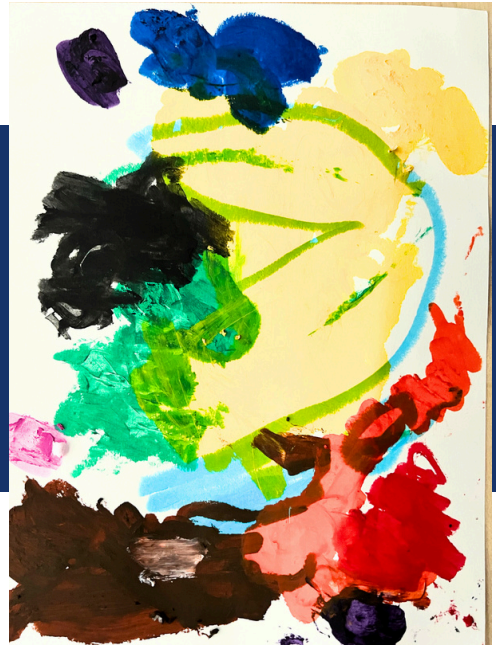
It is my pleasure to welcome you and your children to the [cdc@cbi](#) community! Our school is built on the philosophy of the Reggio Emilia approach, which values the child as an individual with unique interests and abilities, while emphasizing the importance of creating a nurturing, child-centered environment where children can explore and learn through play.

At our school, we honor and celebrate our Jewish heritage and culture by incorporating Jewish values and traditions into our daily activities and curriculum. We believe that the values of Judaism, such as kindness, respect, and community, are integral to the development of our children. We are committed to providing a warm, safe, and inclusive environment where children can develop their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical skills. Our dedicated and experienced teachers strive to create meaningful learning experiences that are tailored to the interests and needs of each child.

We value the partnership between parents and educators and encourage open communication and collaboration. We believe that working together we can create a supportive and enriching experience for all our children.

Thank you for entrusting us with the care and education of your children. We are honored to have you join our community and look forward to getting to know you and your family.

Program Overview



Who we are:

cdc@cbi is a Reggio-Emilia, NAEYC accredited child development center that offers inclusive play-based Jewish experiences to our community of students, families, and educators.

Our History:

cdc@cbi was established in 1989 by a group of dedicated community members determined to meet the growing need for full-time, high-quality, student-oriented early childhood education that incorporated Jewish values.

Our Mission:

Create a nurturing learning environment where young children can freely explore and learn about their Jewish identity and culture while discovering the world around them.

Our Goals:

To help children develop the skills and confidence they need to thrive as lifelong learners and engaged members of their communities.





Meet The Team

Jeni Pandolfi



Director

I strive to establish a nurturing and stimulating atmosphere that fosters children's growth, learning, and development of social, emotional, and cognitive skills, preparing them for success in their future. I am responsible for the day-to-day operations of cdc@cbi. making sure that everything runs smoothly and that each child, family and staff member receives the attention and care they need.

Meret Slover



Assistant Director

I support the director in managing the overall operations of cdc@cbi. This includes coordinating schedules, communicating with staff and parents on behalf of the administration, maintaining supplies, and helping to ensure a safe, nurturing, and loving environment for the children, staff, and families.

Steven Kogan



Compliance Coordinator

I ensure that cdc@cbi is in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies. This includes maintaining records, conducting audits, implementing training programs, and working with staff and regulatory agencies to ensure that the preschool meets all requirements for licensure and accreditation.



Program Description

At the Child Development Center at Congregation Beth Israel, we are committed to fostering a caring and supportive community for children, teachers, and families. Our primary objective is to provide a safe and healthy environment that is tailored to each child's unique developmental needs. To accomplish this, we maintain low teacher-to-student ratios, small group sizes, and employ highly trained educators.

As a Jewish preschool, we are dedicated to establishing a solid foundation for our young learners in Jewish traditions, culture, and values. Our curriculum integrates Jewish themes and celebrations to cultivate a deep connection to our heritage. Following the principles of the Reggio Emilia approach, we recognize children as capable, inquisitive, knowledgeable individuals who possess an innate desire to connect with their surroundings. Our educators are attuned to each child's unique abilities and design their lessons and surroundings accordingly to create the most dynamic learning environment.

The CDC offers care for infants, toddlers, and preschool children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age. Our school is full-time only and is open from 8:30-5:30pm, Monday through Friday, with an optional flex time in the morning from 7:30-8:30am.

You can reach our administration staff by phone at (512) 371-0224 or by email at cdcadmin@bethisrael.org.

Licensing and Accreditation

The CDC is licensed through Health and Human Services Child Care Regulation and is required by law to comply with Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers that is set by HHS CCR. If at any time you would like to review these rules you may come by the office and request to see a copy or you may also view them online at: <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/protective-services-providers/child-care-regulation/minimum-standards>

Results of our most recent inspection and our license are posted on the bulletin board inside the office. You may also contact the state licensing office by calling (512) 834-3426.

In addition to the basic requirements set by HHS CCR, the CDC strives to achieve excellence in early childhood education by our accreditation with The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC is the largest national professional organization of early childhood educators that works to promote high-quality early learning for young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research. To be accredited by NAEYC, early childhood programs voluntarily undergo a comprehensive review of our program and student experience every five years. We are proud to be one of the few centers in Austin fully accredited by the National Association of Young Children (NAEYC) and maintains the highest standards throughout its operations.

You can find more information about the accreditation through their website at <https://www.naeyc.org/about-us>.

Enrollment

Before attending the CDC, parents must participate in a tour, submit a waitlist application and, if deemed necessary, schedule a meeting with the Director. All enrollment information is updated on an annual basis. Any changes that need to be made to enrollment information throughout the year must be submitted in writing to the office.

The following must be completed and submitted to the CDC prior to starting:

- Online Enrollment, Emergency Contact & Permission Forms, Discipline and Guidance Policy
- Up to date immunization records
- Written documentation indicating that the child can take part in the program from a licensed health personnel.

We give enrollment priority to siblings of currently enrolled students, CBI Temple Members, CDC and CBI staff, siblings of recent graduates, and members of the Austin Jewish community.

Termination of Enrollment

If at any time you would like to withdraw from the CDC, a thirty-day written notice must be submitted to the director. The parent is responsible for 30 days of tuition starting from the date the notice is submitted. As budget and staff decisions are greatly impacted by enrollment changes, we request notice of complete withdrawal as early as possible so our teachers can prepare your child and their classmates for the transition.

In extreme situations, child's enrollment may be terminated for behavioral issues by the Director and/or CDC Board. The Director will first work with the parents through conferences, working to resolve the issue through various efforts, suggestions for other arrangements, or referrals. A child's enrollment may also be terminated if the parent's account is delinquent 90 days or more.

Classroom Placement

The program director takes great care in determining the most suitable classroom for each child. Factors such as age, temperament, and developmental level are all taken into consideration to ensure that each child is placed in the appropriate setting that offers the best learning environment.

Our goal is to place your child in a classroom that meets their needs and challenges their interests. We strive to maintain continuity of care to promote your child's development, and we create cohorts that advance as a group every twelve months to ensure stable, strong relationships between parents, teachers, and families.

Tuition & Fees

Tuition at cdc@cbi is based on several factors and approved by the CBI Board. Parents will receive at least one month's notice of new rates in the event of an increase at the end of each year. The school does not prorate for closures or provide credit for absences due to illness, vacation, holidays, or emergencies.

Upon enrollment each year, a non-refundable registration fee is due to cover administration costs and secure the child's spot in the program. A deposit equal to one month's tuition is required upon initial enrollment of each student and is refundable with thirty days' written notice of withdrawal. This deposit rolls over from year to year and will be credited automatically to the final tuition bill.

Refunds

No refunds are given for registration fees or tuition. If you know your child will be withdrawing mid month, reach out to the admin team in advance to arrange for a prorated fee.

Payments made for fundraisers, such as Friday Challah or Pizza, are also non-refundable.

Donations

The CDC welcomes all monetary contributions, as well as donations of suitable equipment and supplies. As a non-profit organization, all donations are tax deductible, and the CDC will provide contributors with the appropriate forms.

Ratios & Group Size

What exactly does a low child-staff ratio mean?

Child-staff ratio is defined as the maximum number of children that can be supervised by a single caretaker based on the median age of a group. These ratios are set by our license, but we arrange our classes to meet lower ratios than those required by the State of Texas.

What is the benefit of a low student ratio?

In a low group ratio setting, the quality of interactions between teacher and student have a much more significant impact on their development. This includes improving their learning abilities, language skills, and academic performance. Additionally, receiving more direct attention from teachers can help children feel safe, and secure, contributing to their overall wellbeing.

Staff

Our staff is selected based on education, teaching or childcare experience, and the ability to implement our curriculum. All teachers at the CDC must have appropriate education level for their role and are encouraged and supported in their pursuit of further education. Our hiring process includes resume screening, multiple interviews, verification of education, and a comprehensive background check. As a commitment to your child's education and to our staff, we require that our teachers continuously sharpen their skills by attending workshops and seminars throughout the year, and that they be certified in pediatric first aid and CPR.

What about teacher turnover?

We understand that teacher turnover is a significant concern for parents of young children. Turnover is an unfortunate reality of early childhood education, and studies show that early childhood education has one of the highest turnover rates when compared to other fields. While we strive to maintain a consistent team of caregivers across all classrooms, the dynamic nature of this field sometimes means teachers may move on for various reasons. Our teachers and their contributions make our school great, and we take measures to retain our faculty including competitive compensation and benefits packages, opportunities for professional development, a commitment to promoting from within, and a dedication to fostering a healthy workplace culture. Please know that we are committed to minimizing disruptions and to ensuring your child is always supported by skilled and caring educators. Your child's well-being and continuity in their learning experience are our top priorities.

Staffing - Roles & Descriptions

Director

Responsible for setting the educational program and ensuring all classrooms implement NAEYC guidelines and high-quality curriculum, the Director oversees all aspects of daily operations, including creating and maintaining the annual budget, financial management of both staff payroll and accounts payable and receivable, and all licensing and accreditation compliance, inspection visits, and preparing all required documentation and reports. The Director works closely with the Board, is responsible for hiring, training, supervising and evaluating staff, communicating with families about individual students, special events, school policies, and procedures. The Director recruits and enrolls new families, and represents the school in the greater CBI, Reform Judaism, and Austin community.

Assistant Director

Reporting directly to the Director, the Assistant Director supports the director with staff supervision and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the school. The Assistant Director corresponds with current and future families, coordinates staff schedules, liaises with faculty on behalf of the administration, maintains supplies necessary to school operations, and completes other administrative tasks as assigned.

Staffing- Roles & Descriptions cont'd

Compliance Coordinator

Reporting directly to the Director, the Compliance Coordinator ensures that cdc@cbi is in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies. This includes maintaining records, conducting audits, implementing training programs, and communicating with staff and regulatory agencies to ensure that the preschool meets all requirements for licensure and accreditation. The Compliance Coordinator collaborates with fellow admin on additional tasks necessary to daily operations, including but not limited to creating tuition contracts and payment plans, assisting with staff supervision, and familiarizing new teachers with school policies and procedures.

Lead Teachers

Reporting directly to the Director, Lead teachers are responsible for working with their team to maintain a safe and healthy classroom environment, communicating with families, and working to design the educational environment to meet the needs of all learners. They develop and implement lesson plans to fit the needs of each student in their class. Lead teachers are required to follow NAEYC guidelines and school curriculum, and to communicate regularly with families about individual students, the philosophy of the program, special events, and their classroom activities. Lead teachers serve as mentors and collaborators for Assistants and General Educators, providing support as their colleagues gain experience and develop their knowledge of the field.

Assistant Teacher

Reporting to the Director with day-to-day supervision from their Lead teacher. Assistance help the lead teacher in any way possible including but not limited to: Preparing and setting up activities, implementing portions of the daily program as directed by the lead teacher, assist in keeping the classroom, and storage areas, clean, neat, and orderly, assisting with diapering and potty training.

Floater/ General Educator

Reporting directly to the Director, floating teachers provide additional support for classroom teachers as needs arise, including absences, break coverage, and providing additional support. Floaters also assist the lead teacher in any way possible including but not limited to: Preparing and setting up activities, implementing portions of the daily program as directed by the lead teacher, assist in keeping the classroom, and storage areas, clean, neat, and orderly, assisting with diapering and potty training.

Curriculum

The founders of the Child Development Center recognized the need for providing exceptional early childhood education to engage families with young children to foster their connection to Judaism. To achieve this goal, we created an educational model that draws inspiration from two sources: the world-renowned early childhood schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, and Jewish ideas and values.

The Reggio Emilia approach was selected for its alignment with Jewish values and ability to stimulate creativity and learning. This approach is based on the belief that young children deserve experiences that support multifaceted potential and cultivate a love of learning. Teachers in a Reggio-inspired program prioritize mutual respect with students and families, and use children's interests to customize learning experiences. The process and outcomes of children's projects are carefully documented using words and images, which serve as valuable tools for reflection and dialogue.

The Reggio Emilia approach uses an emergent curriculum approach. Emergent curriculum is based on the premise that children are most successful at learning when classroom experiences account for their interests, strengths, needs, and lived realities. Educators use observations of children throughout their day as a tool for guiding curriculum content. Meaningful learning opportunities are then provided in support of key developmental skills relevant to a specific age group. When ongoing opportunities for practice lead to a child mastering a certain skill, educators respond by enriching the learning experience through the planning and implementation of increasingly difficult tasks. As children repeatedly confront and master these “achievable challenges,” they come to view themselves as competent learners. In addition, the alignment of curriculum content with individual interests and social realities serves to validate all forms of diversity and inspires a lifelong passion for learning.

In emergent curriculum, both teachers and students have initiative and make decisions. This power to impact curriculum direction means that sometimes curriculum is also negotiated between what interests children and what adults know is necessary for children's education and development. Ideas for curriculum emerge from responding to the interests, questions, and concerns generated within a particular environment, by a particular group of people, at a particular time. Thus, emergent curriculum is never built on children's interests alone; teachers and parents also have interests worth bringing into the curriculum. The values and concerns of all the adults involved, both teachers and parents, help the classroom culture evolve.

We have developed a comprehensive framework that reflects our identity across multiple perspectives, incorporating our Jewish heritage, inspiration from the Reggio Emilia approach, emphasis on emergent curriculum, and dedication to fostering essential developmental skills.

Examples and a full explanation can be found in our Curriculum Guide.

Enrichment

Included in your tuition are our Enrichments during the school day. These focus on a variety of subjects and may include Music, Art, Spanish, Hebrew, Nature, and Yoga. Which Enrichments are offered change year to year based on the needs identified by our administration and the availability of qualified Enrichment educators.

While the infant program is welcome to participate in these programs, their attendance will be based on their individual needs and schedule.

Family Involvement

We extend a warm welcome to our families and invite you to regularly visit the school. We encourage parents to participate in providing learning activities by sharing their unique talents and interests. Parent volunteers should coordinate with the Lead Teacher for any classroom activities they wish to host.

Additionally, families are welcome to join classrooms for holidays and special events. To further strengthen our partnership with community organizations, we host annual parent programs, including holiday celebrations and fundraisers.

Program Policies



Discrimination Policy

The CDC at CBI does not discriminate against any child based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion or disabilities. Reasonable accommodations will be made to provide services to persons with disabilities. All children are accepted on a probationary basis. The staff and parents will assess the child's needs to ensure that the program is able to meet the needs of the child.

Inclusion

If we anticipate that a child may have a additional needs and would benefit from additional support, the Director will communicate this information to the family in a supportive, sensitive, and confidential manner. We will provide the family with documentation, an explanation of the concern, and suggested next steps, along with information about available resources for assessments.

Parents of children with identified disabilities or special learning needs are encouraged to share their child's Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), specialized learning plans, or recommendations from doctors, therapists, or school districts. We will use this information, along with input from parents, to plan individualized learning activities and assess the needs of the child while in our care, so we can better meet their unique needs.

Likewise, with written parental permission, the CDC director and/or teachers will provide information to therapists, doctors, school districts, or private schools about a child's behavior and abilities while in our care, or copies from the child's assessment portfolio, when requested.

Specialized consultants, such as speech, occupational, and physical therapists, and other professionals, are welcome to arrange a time to observe the child while at our program and provide therapy on-site at the CDC, using a classroom or meeting room. This will require written parental permission and payment directly to the therapist by the child's parents. The therapists or specialized consultants may obtain information from the teacher about the child and/or review their assessment portfolio only with parental permission. Additionally, teachers and/or the director will meet with the parent and therapist to determine the needs of the child while in our care.

Finally, the CDC director has contact information for several agencies, consultants, and therapists in the Austin area that can provide support services for children with special needs.

Confidentiality

We take confidentiality seriously at the CDC, and all staff and board members abide by the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. We will make every effort to protect the confidentiality of your child and family.

Records are kept secure and are only accessible to staff who directly work with your child. If other schools, therapists, or outside providers request records, we will require a signed authorization from the parent prior to releasing them.

Social Media

We use social media as a way to highlight our program and share the wonderful work taking place behind these walls. Images of children will only be used if permission is given at enrollment. We do not share children's names on any social media.

Child Abuse and Neglect

To protect the well-being and safety of children, the State of Texas requires anyone who suspects child abuse and neglect to report it to the proper authorities. The CDC staff has been trained to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. All suspect indicators will be documented and reported. The CDC is required by law to cooperate with any investigation of child abuse and neglect. Sometimes as part of an investigation children involved will be questioned by a DFPS investigator, if this occurs parents will be notified promptly.

Because of our continuing concern about the welfare of children, we have provided the following information for families: Parents are encouraged to discuss child abuse and neglect with the director and/or their child's teacher. It is important for even suspected abuse or neglect to be reported (toll-free Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400) so that specialists can intervene before more harm is done.

Abuse includes the following acts or omissions:

- Physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child or genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the child.
- Failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent an action by another person that results in causing substantial harm to the child.
- Mental or emotional injury to a child, causing or permitting the child to be in a situation that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development or psychological functioning.
- Sexual conduct harmful to, or failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent, sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional or physical welfare.

Neglect includes:

- Leaving of a child in a situation where their child would be exposed to a substantial risk of physical or mental harm, without arranging for necessary care for the child.
- Placing the child in or failing to remove the child from a situation that requires judgment or actions beyond the child's level of maturity, physical condition or mental abilities and that result in injury or substantial risk of harm to the child.
- Failure to seek, obtain, or follow through with medical care for the child, with the failure resulting in an observable and material impairment to the growth, development or functioning of the child.
- Failure to provide the child with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain life or health of the child, excluding failure caused primarily by financial inability unless relief services had been offered and refused.

Discipline and Guidance

We believe that discipline and guidance should be consistent and based on an understanding of individual needs and development. A positive guidance technique promotes self-discipline and acceptable behavior. There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed
- Withholding active play or keeping a child inside as a consequence for behavior, unless that child is exhibiting behavior that requires a brief supervised separation.
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age
- Restraining a child in any punitive or disciplinary manner that renders them unable to remove themselves from restraint

Positive guidance techniques used by the Child Development Center staff will include but are not limited to:

- Recognizing and encouraging appropriate behavior
- Developing reasonable and clear rules and expectations for each group
- Clear safety rules and expectations
- Explaining the consequences of inappropriate behaviors
- Redirecting children into positive behaviors
- Modeling pro-social behaviors
- Enforcing limits and rules consistently and fairly
- Helping children to identify and express feelings in acceptable ways

Please discuss with your child's teacher specific guidance techniques that work best with your child.

Changes at home can affect a child's behavior at the school. The CDC staff is here to work with you regarding challenging behaviors observed at school or at home. In case of continued behavior that is potentially harmful to your child, other children, or property, you will be notified immediately, and may be asked to come to the school to join or pick up your child from the program.

Emergencies

Monthly fire drills and occasional shelter and lockdown drills will be routinely held to acquaint your child with emergency procedures as required by licensing. The evacuation routes are posted in each classroom and the storm shelter is the area in front of the bathrooms on the first floor. In a situation where the campus is no longer safe such as a nearby chemical spill, the children will be taken to wherever local law enforcement deem safe. Parents and emergency contacts will be called. If necessary, your physician will be notified and 911 will be called.

The CDC has written procedures for emergencies including bad weather, fire evacuations, unauthorized persons on campus, and relocations. Our school takes security and safety extremely seriously. All families are required to use a code to gain entrance to the facility at all times, and we ask all families to leave the fire lanes always clear, including drop off and pick up.

Arrival and Departure

Because the CDC is an educational program, we encourage all families to drop off between 8:30-9:00, this allows the children to participate fully in all educational opportunities provided in the classroom and minimizes disruptions for the other children. If you need to drop off later due to an appointment, please inform the CDC staff so we can plan accordingly. Please note because of staff scheduling we will not allow drop offs after 10:30 am without approval. Additionally we do not allow pick-ups during nap time which is between the hours of 11:30am and 2:30 pm to ensure proper rest for all the children.

Parents must sign in and out their child using the Brightwheel app. Our staff must continue to assume supervision of all children until the parent and child leave the classroom or playground where staff members are on duty.

For the safety of all during arrival and departure, CDC requests that parents maintain stringent supervision of their child in and around the parking lots and the grassy area around the temple premises. Children should not be allowed in any classrooms until a parent has signed the child in, nor should they be allowed to wander the premises without an adult supervising them closely. Even though the parking lot can be seen from the building, parents must not leave any infant or child under the age of 10 in the car at any time of the year, even for a few minutes to drop off a sibling, since it is considered leaving a child in a potentially dangerous situation (especially due to extreme weather in Central Texas).

When children are picked up from school, be sure to sign them out in the BrightWheel app and inform the assigned staff. Children will be asked to pick up materials they are using before they leave the classroom or playground. Please check cubbies and take-home folders for artwork and notes, and hooks for soiled clothing.

Arrival and Departure cont'd

The policy for release of children is as follows:

- A child is released only to a parent or an adult designated by the parent in writing and added to the BrightWheel app as an approved pickup.
- If a person authorized to pick up a child is unknown to the staff, the staff will require that the individual present a driver's license and staff will record the license number or take a photocopy.
- If a person is not on the approved pickup list or the school is not notified of an alternate pickup, the child will not be released until parental approval is confirmed
- The CDC is unable to accept or release children from/to older siblings under the age of sixteen.

Please pick up your child promptly at their scheduled departure time. Children may become anxious and worried when they are not picked up on time. If you are running late, please message the teachers via BrightWheel so the best care arrangements can be made.

AM Flex Time

We offer an early morning drop-off called AM Flex time. It is a monthly fee of \$200.00 added to your tuition. If you need care between the hours of 7:30-8:30 please add this to your tuition contract.

If you are not enrolled in AM Flex and need to arrange early drop-off or late pick-up for a one-time occurrence, you can do so by contacting the Admin team and paying a one-time fee of \$25.

If you drop-off before 8:30am, we will automatically charge a \$25 one-time fee. If this happens 3 or more times in single month, you will be automatically enrolled in AM Flex Care at a rate of \$200/month. Late pick-ups after the school is closed will incur a flat \$25 fee at 5:30 pm, and then charged at \$1.00 per minute for each additional minute of care.

Child Custody

It is our intent to meet the needs of children especially when the parents may be experiencing difficult situations such as divorce, separation or remarriage. Sharing information about such situations may be helpful to CDC staff and will be held in the strictest confidentiality. The classrooms will make every effort to accommodate these situations.

cdc@cbi cannot legally restrict the non-custodial parent from visiting the child, reviewing the child's records or picking the child up unless the CDC has been furnished with legally filed, executed and current documents. Copies of all court documents must be submitted to the administrative office. In case of conflicts, the proper authorities will be contacted.

Building Access and Security

The CDC makes every effort to ensure the safety of the building and children in our care, to this end all entry doors require a door code to open. Do not let anyone in as you are entering the building. If someone is standing at the door that you do not know, wait until you hear the door release indicating the person has clearance. If you see someone suspicious, inform the admin staff immediately. If you see someone you do not know inside the building, do not hesitate to ask them if they need assistance and guide them to the CDC office. Please stay with them until they are assisted. All parents will receive a new door code each month to gain access into the building during school hours. Please do not share this code with anyone who is not an authorized pickup person. To visit the preschool upstairs or the playground, a fob pass is required for re-access to the school. We keep fobs in the front office, please seek assistance from staff if you cannot locate a fob.

Birthday Parties/ Celebrations

Birthdays are very important and we like to celebrate with you. Please contact your child's teacher several days in advance to make plans for a simple celebration in your child's classroom. You may share a snack of your child's favorite food, such as a favorite fruit or muffin if you would like. If you choose to do this, please follow all food safety and allergy guidelines outlined in this document. If your child is having a party, you may send invitations to CDC families via email or in their cubbies, but we request each child in the class is invited if you communicate this way.

The CDC strives to maintain a culture of inclusivity and is respectful of all holidays and celebrations families may observe. Many holiday traditions will be observed during the school year, with emphasis on family gatherings, traditional foods, songs, dance and symbols. Parents are encouraged to share their individual family traditions with the class by sending a traditional food for snack, reading a story, or visiting the class to share how holidays are celebrated in your home.

Grievance Procedure

We encourage parents to initiate a dialogue with their child's teacher or the director if they have any concerns or issues. It is recommended that parents schedule a mutually convenient time to meet with the teacher, ensuring they are not responsible for the care of the children. Although the director is available throughout the day, scheduling a meeting in advance is convenient for all parties involved. Our objective is to resolve any conflicts satisfactorily at this initial level, ensuring the parent and the school are content with the outcome.

If the director is unable to resolve the difference with the parent, the parent can seek guidance from the CDC board chairperson. The chairperson may meet with the parent, with or without the director, and additional executive CDC members may be present if the parent desires. In some cases, a letter to the CDC board may be appropriate after the director and/or chairperson have attempted to resolve the conflict. If the above channels of communication fail to resolve the issue, the parent may request to speak with a CBI board member.

Staff Babysitting

Parents are welcome to utilize CDC staff for babysitting or to arrange childcare outside of school hours provided they are not in conflict with the staff member's CDC duties or schedule. These arrangements are between the teacher and family and are the CDC is not responsible and disclaims any liability for the acts or omissions of CDC staff members during non-working hours.

Visitors

Parents and family members are always welcome to visit at the CDC to observe, to eat lunch with your child, to volunteer, to help in the classroom, or to share a special talent with the children. Please arrange visits in advance so classroom staff can plan accordingly and minimize disruptions.

Health and Wellness Policy



Handwashing

All children required to are wash their hands upon arrival to the program, before all snacks and meal, after toileting/diaper changes, after playing outside, before and after water play, and other times as needed.

Illness

For infants and other children in their first year at the school, expect your child to get sick far more frequently than you might think possible. Building immunity takes time, and for some families the first year of school (regardless of age) can lead to a lot of missed work for parents, which can be frustrating. The good news is that children become far more resilient as they grow. When the CDC staff calls to let you know your child isn't feeling well and needs to go home, we are worried about the unwell child and protecting the rest of the children and staff. We always err on the side of caution to prevent the spread of viruses and make sure your child gets the care they need. Every now and then, it might be a false alarm, or short-lived. But usually, when a child is not eating and drinking regularly, or appears physically uncomfortable, they are indeed ill. Children are required to stay home if they have contagious symptoms, like a fever, rash, vomiting, and loose stools until they are symptom-free for a minimum of 24 hours without fever-reducing medication. It is best if a child is not feeling well to let them rest and recover completely before bringing them back to school.

The staff takes extensive precautions to prevent the unnecessary spread of illness; toys are washed and sanitized regularly in all classrooms, and after each individual child uses and mouths them in the infant and toddler program. Changing tables are disinfected between children, and staff washes hands and wears gloves to protect the children from cross contamination.

The following criteria from our state license is used to determine if a child is sick:

- **A fever of 100.4 measured by an ear thermometer.**
- **If your child shows signs of illness, such as not drinking or eating, inability to sleep, and/or fatigue, listlessness, repeated vomiting or multiple episodes of diarrhea, or any indication of unusual discomfort or pain, we will take their temperature and check for rashes, runny noses, and other possible symptoms.**
- **If their illness prevents them from participating comfortably in the usual classroom activities or creates a greater need for care than the staff can provide, we will contact the family to come pick-up the child.**
- **If a child's condition is suspected to be contagious and requires exclusion as identified by public health authorities, then the child is made comfortable in a location where he or she is supervised by a familiar caregiver until their parents arrive.**

Illness cont'd

After your child has been ill, it is important to adhere to the following guidelines when determining whether your child is ready to return to school:

- no fever for 24 hours from onset (without fever-reducing medication).
- antibiotics (if prescribed) have been used for a full 24 hours.
- no vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours.
- frequent coughing, excessive nasal discharge has been resolved.
- Any severe pain (earache, cramps, headache, etc.) resolved.
- A pediatrician or physician has determined they are able to return in writing.

Parents will be notified if their child is exposed to a potentially contagious disease while at school. Likewise, parents should notify the CDC if their child has been exposed to or has a diagnosis of a contagious illness such as covid, pink eye, head lice, ringworm, chicken pox, etc.

One of the best ways to prevent the spread of disease is to have strictly enforced standards regarding the exclusion of children who may be ill. We need your help with this. Do not bring ill children to the CDC and if your child becomes ill at the CDC, please pick the child up as soon as possible.

If you believe your child is ready to return to school before they are free of symptoms, you are required to provide a doctor's note confirming that they are no longer contagious and are fit to return to the classroom.

Immunizations and Health Statement

Upon enrollment all children in the program must have current immunizations according to the immunization schedules of the Austin Metropolitan Health Department and TX DFPS Minimum Standards. Parents must bring in documentation signed by a physician certifying that all immunizations are up to date. Any child on a delayed or alternative vaccination schedule is also required to provide documentation signed by a physician as required by DSHS.

A health statement confirming that the child has been seen by a physician within the past year and is physically able to take part in the CDC's program is also required with all students' initial enrollment.

We recommend families provide a copy of their child's new immunization list whenever they are received at routine checkups to ensure this information is current. The CDC regularly audits our immunization records and will notify families if any information is missing. If the CDC is not provided with required health documentation within two weeks of the request, the child may not attend school until all required documents are received.

Medication Policy

The CDC will not give the first dose of any prescription medications. Children with a temperature over 100.4 degrees can receive a fever-reducer to ease discomfort while waiting to go home with signed permission on record. When it is necessary for a child to receive medication during the day, the staff will strictly adhere to the following guidelines for administration of medication set by the DFPS Minimum Standards:

- Prescription medications will be administered only when it is in the original container labeled with the child's first and last name, date prescription filled, name and strength of prescription, name of manufacturer, expiration date of medication or the period of use, directions on how to administer and how to store, and the prescribing physician's name. The medication will be administered only as stated on the label directions and only with written permission from parent or a signed medication authorization form which can be obtained from the teacher or the CDC office.
- Any prescribed medication without a specified dosage, such as "as prescribed" or "consult a physician" must be accompanied by a signed note from the physician indicating the appropriate dosage.
- Expired medications will not be administered under any circumstances.

If your child requires medication during the day you should deliver the medication directly to the teacher, along with a completed medication form which may be obtained in your child's classroom or the front office. To ensure the safety of all children, never leave medication in your child's backpack or lunch box. All medication will need to be picked up at the end of the school year.

No medication will be administered to a child without a completed medication authorization form. Teachers will document each dose of medication given and will keep all medications inaccessible to children at all times. It is the parent's responsibility to retrieve the medication at the end of the day. It is prohibited by licensing for staff to add medicine to bottles, cups or food, or to provide dosed bottles, cups, or food to children. Do not send medicine pre-mixed in bottles, cups, or food.

Snacks and Lunch Guidelines

Please feed your child breakfast at home before coming to school.

The CDC provides AM and PM snacks. A calendar will be posted each month on the parent information board for your reference. Our snacks feature fresh fruits and vegetables, healthy carbs, and proteins. On Friday morning, children have grape juice and challah for snack in observance of shabbat.

Snacks and Lunch Guidelines cont'd

The CDC partners with the Barnison Catering lunch program to provide hot lunches for families that would like to purchase lunch for their children. Parents who do not choose this option should send servings of foods for their own child's lunch that meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) daily recommendations for young children and offer a balanced diet. We do not serve sugary snacks and ask parents to refrain from regularly sending desserts in lunches. The staff will work individually with families as needed on the nutritional needs of their child. If your child is sent to school without a packed lunch or a lunch ordered from Barnison, our school will provide a lunch. If a child is sent without lunch more than once in a month, a \$5 fee will be charged via Brightwheel.

All lunch boxes must be labeled clearly with the child's name. We will inform you if your child needs more food for lunch. Uneaten portions of lunch (that can be easily repackaged) are returned in the lunch box so that parents will be aware of their child's dislikes or changing appetites. Please send an ice pack in the child's lunch box to keep foods from spoiling. Send lunches which do not require extensive heating, though we will warm foods in the microwave as needed.

The following are licensing guidelines that we must adhere to for infants under 13 months:

- Bottles and feeding schedules provided to the teacher will need to be updated at least monthly.
- Formula or breast milk is warmed in water at no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit for no more than 5 minutes; a microwave is not allowed for warming bottles or infant food.
- Cow's milk should not be sent for children under 12 months; whole milk or reduced fat milk should be sent for children 12 - 24 months of age.
- All extra formula and baby food should be sent in factory-sealed containers and will be prepared according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Bottles can not contain any medication or solid foods, unless the child's doctor provides written instructions to do so.
- The teachers will discard after two hours any formula or breast milk that is served but not completely consumed or not refrigerated.
- Teachers do not offer solid food or fruit juices to infants younger than six months, unless recommended by the child's health care provider and approved by families.
- Infant Teachers will work individually with parents who desire to send breast milk and/or desire to come nurse their child while in our care.
- We accept, store, and serve expressed breast milk for feedings; accepting milk in ready to feed sanitary containers. The containers must be labeled with the child's name and the date. It can be stored in the refrigerator for no longer than 48 hours (or more than 24 hours if the breast milk was previously frozen) or in a freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below no longer than 3 months. The CDC provides a comfortable place for breastfeeding if requested. The staff will strive to coordinate feedings with the infant's mother.
- Children are fed on demand, therefore, please send slightly more than the amount normally consumed during the time your child is at school to allow for extra hunger.

Snacks and Lunch Guidelines cont'd

Children are not permitted to crawl or walk around with food, bottles or sippy cups, and will be asked to sit at a table to finish their food or drink. **Do not send pork/pork products or shellfish at any time.**

The following foods present a choking hazard and should not be sent at any time for children under the age of 2:

- Whole Hot dogs or large pieces of meat
- Whole grapes
- Popcorn or hard pretzels
- Raw peas
- Raw chunks of carrots, or other vegetables

Allergies - General

Our goal is to safeguard children with food allergies by collaborating with parents to prevent exposure to the allergen. In situations where a child has specific nutritional needs or suffers from food allergies, their healthcare provider must provide an individualized care plan for the program. To ensure the safety of children who are highly allergic to peanuts and nuts, as well as those with undiagnosed allergies to these items, the CDC maintains nut-free classrooms. All personnel will be trained in recognizing, preventing, and responding to anaphylaxis in children in their care. We also request that our CDC families comply with our "nut-free" policy recommendation.

Parents are requested to not provide food containing nut and nut products within the CDC. This includes: Pine Nuts, Hazelnuts, Almonds, Cashews, Pecans, Peanuts, Pistachios

Please leave the following items at home that commonly contain nuts:

Spreads: Peanut Butter, Nutella, Almond Butter, Cashew Butter

Oils, Salad Dressing, Sauces: Peanut or Cashew Oil, Pesto, Tamari-Cashew Dressings

Cookies & Baked Goods: Biscotti, Macadamia Cookies, Pecan Pie

Candies: Peanut M&M's, Snickers, Reese's Cereals & Trail Mixes: Honey Nut Cheerios Chips, Crackers,

Bread: Banana Bread, Nut thins

Please note: many packaged items will be marked that they are "made in plants that also process nuts". Pretzels and most bakery items should be checked for the label, "made in a nut and tree-nut free facility."

Please see the following page for information on severe allergies, allergy action plans, and Epi-Pens.

Allergy Action Plans & Epi-Pens

To ensure the safety and well-being of all students, any child with a physician-diagnosed allergy must have a current Allergy Action Plan on file before their first day of attendance. This plan must be signed by the child's physician and submitted to the school prior to the start of the school year or upon diagnosis of a new allergy. These will be provided to all teachers and posted in the classroom, and a class may adjust their routines or procedures to reasonably accommodate a specific or severe sensitivity.

If the student's Allergy Action Plan indicates the need for an EpiPen or any epinephrine rescue device, the device **must be provided to the school on or before the student's first day**. All medication must be supplied in **its original packaging**, clearly labeled with:

- The child's full name
- The prescribing physician's name
- The date of manufacture
- The expiration date

Parents and guardians are responsible for **promptly replacing any expired EpiPens or rescue medications**. To maintain student safety, **a child may not be allowed to attend school if their required medication is missing, expired, or otherwise unavailable**.

Safety Reminder

For the health and safety of children, families and staff, we ask your help with the following:

- The CDC does not allow smoking, vaping, drugs, firearms or weapons of any kind in the classrooms, playgrounds or the temple premises and parking lot.
- For the safety of the children, parents should not bring cups of coffee or hot beverages without a lid into the classrooms or playgrounds
- All toys, paints and other materials used at the CDC are lead-free.

Parking Lot Policy

For the safety of everyone the CDC prohibits any person from operating or driving a motor vehicle or truck at a rate of speed in excess of ten miles per hour (10 mph). All vehicles must enter the parking lot to the right and follow the road around to the front of the building when exiting the parking lot. Vehicles in the parking lot should not be left idling unless needed in extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures. Parking is prohibited in fire lanes to ensure the access of safety equipment and vehicles to the building in the event of an emergency.

The CDC encourages parents to follow all car safety guidelines by using seat belts for all passengers, appropriate car seats and/or booster seats for young children and not transporting children in the front seat of any vehicle. The CDC office has additional resources on car safety guidelines in the office.

Classroom Policies



What to Bring

Our program emphasizes the value of hands-on exploration and diverse experiences for children. We encourage them to engage in activities such as painting and digging in the dirt, and we also advise families to opt for school clothes that can withstand some mess and are easy to clean. It's best to dress your child in durable and comfortable clothing since they will be spending time outside every day, weather permitting.

- Rubber soled shoes are best for active young children on the playground; Shoes are required for all children including those not yet walking to wear on the playground.
- Two complete changes of clothing must be kept in a child's cubby or backpack at all times.
- All articles of removable clothing (jackets, sweaters, hats, etc.) should be marked clearly with child's name.

What Your Infant Will Need:

- Bottles, formula/breast milk
- Food (Homemade baby food or store bought in sealed containers is ok)
- Diapers
- Two changes of clothes
- Two crib sheets (Port-a-crib size)
- Sleep Sack
- Wipes
- Family photos to post for your child (i.e. Mom, Dad, Grandma, Grandpa, brothers, sisters, family pets).
- The CDC accepts glass bottles in the infant rooms but requires families to use a silicon sleeve on each to prevent accidental breakage. We highly recommend a brand like Life factory that are high quality, thermal shock resistant, and made of borosilicate glass.

Label all food and personal items you bring for your child!

We recommend that parents of toddlers, twos, and preschoolers label their child's backpack with their name clearly marked on the front or inside. Similarly, sippy cups, water bottles, and lunch boxes should also be labeled with their name. While we make every effort to help children keep track of their belongings, labeling items with their name will help us in this process. If something does get lost, parents can check the lost and found bin located in the front office.

Personal items such as pacifiers and comfort objects are allowed and encouraged during appropriate times of the day, such as separation from parents and nap time. Infant, toddler, and two-year-old children will have access to such items throughout the day as needed, while older children will be encouraged to self-soothe as needed. We kindly request that personal toys be left at home, as it can be difficult for children to share their favorite toys and it can be heartbreaking when they are lost or broken. However, we encourage children to bring books, pictures, or other educational items related to the current classroom theme. Please note that money, candy, iPads/tablets, and gum are not allowed at school for children at any time.

Diapering

Parents of children who wear diapers are requested to bring an adequate supply of disposable diapers. It's recommended to bring a full package of disposable diapers at a time or arrange for direct delivery to the school. As we change children's diapers as needed and at regular intervals throughout the day, families should estimate that more diapers will be required at school than at home.

In case the diaper supply is running low, teachers will notify parents to replenish them. It's important to replenish wipes when diapers are restocked. If parents wish to use diaper rash ointment, they must provide it themselves and label it with their child's name. Additionally, written permission is required for the use of diaper creams.

Hellos and Goodbyes

We strive to make your child feel safe, comfortable, and secure during transitions, and we're happy to work with you towards achieving this goal. If possible, we suggest spending a few minutes in the classroom with your child during drop-off and pick-up. This brief period of presence will help ease your child into the room, but it's not recommended to stay too long as it may give the impression that you will be spending the entire time with them.

It's important to always say goodbye to your child, even when they're deeply engaged in interacting and playing, as disappearing without warning can be frightening. Working with your child's teachers to create a fun and loving hello and goodbye ritual can help them know what to expect and feel in control during transitions. Whether it's a simple kiss and "see you later alligator," or a gentle "shove" out the door like our alumni tradition, a ritual can be comforting.

Separation anxiety is normal developmental behavior, and lack of sleep, illness, changes in schedule, returning from trips, and having house guests can all make saying goodbye harder on some days. However, reassuring your child is the best thing you can do. Typically, they are distracted and comforted by their caregivers, and calm down within moments or minutes after you leave.

To help your child adjust to school, we recommend talking with them about school, its activities, teachers, and other children before coming to school. It's important to bring them into their classroom with a positive attitude and reassure them that you will return after a specific activity such as nap or lunch. Lingering can be upsetting to your child, so it's best to kiss them goodbye and then leave. You can always email or message the teachers via BrightWheel during the day to check on how your child is doing.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Each year, all parents are given the opportunity to participate in at least two rounds of parent-teacher conferences with their child's Lead Teacher.

The first round of parent-teacher conferences typically takes place in the fall, and the second round of conferences takes place in late spring or early summer.

If you would like to schedule an additional conference with your child's teacher, you are encouraged to reach out via Brightwheel message or email to schedule a mutually convenient time.

Communication

At the core of our program for young children, we prioritize direct and effective communication that fosters a safe, caring, and connected community. Please don't hesitate to discuss any concerns you have about day-to-day operations, the program, or your child's care with their teachers or the CDC Director. For school-wide and classroom updates, we use Brightwheel and email as our primary classroom communication tools, including event updates.

To inform us about your child's absence or illness, kindly send a message via Brightwheel, call 512-371-0224, or email cdcadmin@bethisrael.org. Important notices and forms will be available at the office, and parent information will be posted in the classroom.

For any significant changes such as a different pick-up person, or if your child will be going home with a friend, please provide a dated, signed, and written notice to the CDC staff.

All communication during the school day must go through school channels (Brightwheel, school phone, classroom emails). Parents are expected to refrain from contacting teachers on personal devices during the school day.

In cases of inclement weather, we generally follow the Austin Independent School District's closure decisions. Delayed starts will be assessed based on the situation at the CDC. Please stay tuned to local radio or TV stations for school closure reports. Additionally, the Director will email parents regarding any school closures due to inclement weather.

Media and Technology

Children under the age of two will not be permitted regular screen time as per NAEYC and the recommendation of the American Pediatric Association.

Acceptable use in the Infants, Toddlers, and Twos program is as follows:

- To briefly find and discuss with a caregiver images of their families, friends, animals, or diverse images of children and people they might not otherwise encounter (from other countries, for example).
- To take photos with and of the children, or to use the camera feature as a mirror to interact and discuss with the child.
- To make an audio or video recording to document a child's progress and learning.
- To listen to audio/video recordings of sounds and music, such as using Spotify to play lullaby songs, to play the sound of ocean waves, or other digital recordings that support the curriculum.
- To communicate with a parent over a live video conference, such as to capture the first steps, first words, or other developmental milestones, or to consult on the health and well-being of the child.

The CDC believes that three's and fours can and should use interactive technology and digital media on a regular basis while interacting with other peers and teachers, acceptable use is:

- To freely explore touch screens loaded with developmentally appropriate technology
- To explore and feel comfortable using the keyboard and mouse
- To look up information or websites to answer questions and find photographs and videos of animals, places, people, and objects not readily available in the classroom
- To capture photos of creations, developmental progress, and to document accomplishments with audio and visual recordings
- To provide assistive technology to children with special needs and/or developmental delays
- To explore digital storytelling, listen to music and audio/visual clips of music, watch short videos demonstrating concepts and ideas, and apps designed to promote social interaction and pretend and play planning
- To communicate with others, such as by co-authoring an email with a teacher, or using live video chat to contact family members, or interact with children at other schools
- To create artworks, alter images, and explore interactive visual media

Teachers are responsible for monitoring and supervising all technology and digital media used in the classroom. Any website or program that is "passive" or is a digitally formatted worksheet is prohibited. All apps and programs used at the school must have meaningful content, promote investigation and inquiry, facilitate active engagement and be user- friendly for children (free of inappropriate content and advertisements). Children should always be partnered with a peer or utilizing technology with a teacher.

Nap and Rest Time

We understand the importance of rest and its positive impact on a child's growth. Licensing regulations mandate all children in our care are required to have a quiet/rest time, and we strictly prohibit any form of punishment associated with nap time.

Studies show that napping immediately after learning improves a child's memory retention and overall performance. Even though some children may naturally give up napping sooner than others, we respect each child's preference and never force them to sleep. However, we do encourage all children to remain on their mats and maintain a quiet environment out of respect for others who require sleep.

Our trained staff follows safe and gentle practices to help children sleep, which includes explaining every touch to the child, ensuring the room is dim but not too dark, patting and rubbing the child's back, holding or rocking infants, and respecting family preferences.

Our goal is to create a safe and secure environment for children, and we understand that each child may have varying preferences. Teachers may sing, play soothing music or read to children, and they are required to stay awake and actively supervise during nap time.

Our staff will not attempt to keep a child awake, and will not wake a sleeping child before the end of the designated nap/rest time.

After the 1 hour of rest time, any children who are awake will engage in quiet activities such as reading, drawing, or puzzles. Children still sleeping at the end of nap time will be allowed to sleep until they naturally awaken.

Nap time is scheduled after lunch and a short calm activity period when children tend to be sleepy. Parents must provide their child's nap mats, blankets, and pillows for their comfort and warmth, and the school provides cots and cribs.

For infants, we place them on their backs to sleep in a crib with a firm surface and require sleep sacks under 12 months of age. No additional items may be in a child's crib unless recommended by a physician.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is an integral part of the day's program. All classes play outside daily, weather permitting, on the playground and/or take walks around the temple grounds. In extremely hot weather (over 95 or heat index above 95 degrees) or extremely cold temperatures (under 35 degrees or on cold days that are wet and windy), the children will go outside briefly for no more than 15-minutes at a time, typically on a walk. Classes will not go outside during storms or when the air quality is determined to be unsafe by local health authorities.

Biting Information

At CDC, we recognize that children under the age of three are just beginning to develop their language and social-emotional skills, and that biting during this age is often not premeditated or aggressive. Rather, it is due to a temporary lack of the necessary skills and physical abilities to control their emotions and thoughts. We understand that families may experience strong emotions when a child is bitten, and we are committed to working together to provide children with the support and safety they need.

To prevent biting behaviors, our focus is on teaching children what they should do instead of biting, and tracking patterns and trends to identify potential triggers. Our staff is trained to use a range of strategies and tools to prevent bites and help children quickly move through biting phases. We collect data on when, where, and why biting incidents occur and make purposeful changes to the classroom environment, materials, daily schedule, and groupings of children accordingly.

Our director and teachers are vigilant and may observe the class briefly to identify any trends and offer support to the staff. We also document every biting incident we witness and ensure that both sets of families are informed on the same day.

It is not uncommon for biting episodes to occur when a group of children are in the same developmental phase, such as when they become mobile or teething. During these times, our staff and director work with parents to communicate about environmental and staffing changes for the group. With regular communication and collaboration, we can help children navigate these developmental phases and prevent biting behaviors.

Toilet Training

The teachers will collaborate with parents whose children display signs of being prepared to learn how to use the restroom. In particular, if a child's diaper is dry, the staff will promote and support the child in toilet training. Children who have transitioned to wearing underwear should bring additional pairs of underwear and attire, such as socks and shoes, in case of accidents, which will be handled in a relaxed and encouraging manner. Toilet learning can differ significantly among children, with some starting as early as 18 months, and an average age of 2 and a half. Additionally, some children may show interest in school but not at home, or vice versa. Thus, the staff will work individually with each child and their family to support the child's readiness to learn how to use the restroom.

Some of the typical signs of toilet learning readiness include:

- Interest in using the toilet
- Ability to indicate need or desire to use the toilet
- Awareness of physical cues prior to using the toilet
- Can stay dry for at least two hours at a time
- Often wakes up dry after nap
- Wants diaper dry; dislikes soiled or wet diaper
- Some interest and ability in dressing

Sunscreen and Insect Repellant

Since the classes play outside each day in the morning and afternoon, weather permitting, and given the intensity of the Central Texas sun, parents are encouraged to send their child with protective clothing for the sun, such as sun hats, and/or apply sunscreen on their child before school. For children staying in the later afternoon program, teachers will reapply sunscreen after nap if parents provide the sunscreen. The sunscreen must be labeled with the child's name and written permission/request to reapply must be given on the child's enrollment form.

If desired, parents may also want to apply insect repellant to their child prior to arriving to school.

Teachers will reapply repellant only if the parent provides the repellant labeled with the child's name and given written permission/request to reapply on a medication form. Insect repellants with DEET should be sent if recommended to be used by the local health authorities because of a high risk of insect-borne disease.

Our Commitment to Equity and Inclusion (NAEYC Standards)

The Child Development Center at Congregation Beth Israel (CDC @ CBI) is proud to be a NAEYC-accredited school. NAEYC (the National Association for the Education of Young Children) outlines clear guidelines and expectations for accredited programs, including a strong emphasis on diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-bias education. As a NAEYC-accredited school, we are committed to upholding the highest standards of early childhood education.

From NAEYC's Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education position statement:

“Early childhood educators have a professional obligation to advance equity. This includes recognizing and challenging bias related to race, language, gender identity, family structure, and more. Young children are aware of and affected by bias. Silence about identity and injustice teaches children that topics of difference and fairness are taboo.”

Anti-bias education is ***not a political agenda or a personal teaching preference***; it is an essential framework recognized by leading experts in child development and ***required*** by our accrediting board. It supports children in developing healthy self-identities, appreciating differences, thinking critically about fairness, and acting with empathy and compassion.

In our classroom, we bring these standards to life through daily experiences — from the books we read, to the materials we provide, to the conversations we hold, and the ways we navigate conflict and community. We are committed to ensuring that every child feels seen, valued, and empowered to show up as their full self. This is part of our commitment as a NAEYC-accredited school and our professional responsibility to foster a safe, inclusive learning environment for all children and families.

We believe that every child deserves to grow up in a world that is just, kind, and equitable — and that begins in the classroom. We are committed to creating an inclusive learning environment where all children and families feel seen, heard, and valued. We celebrate diversity, affirm all identities, and teach children to recognize unfairness and speak up with kindness and courage. Our classroom is a community where difference is not just accepted but celebrated. We honor each child's identity and actively teach respect, fairness, and inclusion.

Our anti-bias curriculum helps children:

- Build a positive self-identity and confidence
- Embrace differences in others
- Recognize unfairness and bias when it occurs
- Learn ways to speak up and care for others

Topics such as race, gender, family structure, ability, and identity are approached in developmentally appropriate ways that foster empathy, critical thinking, and belonging. We believe this work is essential — not optional — to the social, emotional, and ethical development of young children.

We understand that this framework may feel new or different for some families, and we are here to engage in thoughtful dialogue as we work together to support your child's growth and sense of belonging.

Questions or Concerns?

We are committed to fostering an open dialogue between our families, teachers, and administration. If you ever have questions about our policies and procedures which aren't answered in our Parent Handbook or Curriculum Guide, please don't hesitate to reach out to our team.

Contact cdc@chi

PHONE

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